

VZCZCXRO5768  
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHGB #2187 1951331  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 131331Z JUL 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8303  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 002187

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/11/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: PRT WASIT:OPENING OF YOUTH AND SPORTS CENTERS

Classified By: PRT Team Leader Robert Kagler for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) This is a PRT Wasit reporting cable.

12. (C) Summary: Three Youth and Sports Centers located in Badrah, Numaniyah, and Al Kut were opened with elaborate ceremonies on July 9 by the Minister of Youth and Sport Jassim Mohammad Ja'far, along with the Wasit Governor and Provincial Council Chairman. Thirteen centers are being built or rebuilt in Wasit province, all of which are being funded and contracted for by the Iraqi government. Although The Al Kut center appeared well-constructed and well-furnished, there was no sign of sports equipment or the internet center promised by the Wasit Director General of Youth and Sport. End Summary.

13. (C) A hot southern Iraq afternoon played host to the opening ceremony of the new Al Kut Youth and Sport Center. Jassim Mohammad Ja'far, National Minister of Youth and Sport, cut the opening ribbon and oversaw the killing of a sheep to dedicate the new Al Kut Youth and Sport Center in the Horra district of Al Kut. Minister Ja'far and the Wasit Director General of Youth and Sport both spoke at length to a gathering of some 200 people including Wasit Governor Turfa, the PRT Deputy Team Leader, PRT POL and PD representatives and the Commander of the 41st Fires Brigade. The event was covered by nine media agencies including Al Baghdadia TV, Al Iraqia TV, Al Masaar TV, Al Salaam TV, and Al Nahrain TV. The Al Kut center was one of four youth centers opened across Wasit province on 9 July. The others, located in Badrah, Numaniyah, and Muafakia are three of thirteen youth centers either being constructed or renovated by the Iraqi government (5 new and 8 rebuilt) throughout Wasit province. Work on the centers began last September and all thirteen are expected to be finished later this year.

14. (C) The new IQD 600 million (500,000 USD) Al Kut Youth and Sport Center was funded and contracted by the Iraqi government. It is designed to serve as an active youth center and headquarters of the Youth and Sport Ministry in Wasit province. The center, under the jurisdiction of the Wasit Director General for Sport Mr. Salam Al Faali, contained numerous well-equipped offices but no sports or computer equipment.

15. (C) Comment: The opening of well-constructed centers is testament to the increased capability of the provincial government to fund, contract, and oversee projects. However, there was little evidence of the facilities or equipment required to conduct the long list of services the center is supposed to provide, including educational services, art classes, lectures, team sports, and internet access. At present one is left with the distinct impression that local bureaucrats have provided well stocked and air conditioned offices for themselves and little if anything for the people.

End Comment.

CROCKER